

## February 9, 2021 Council Meeting

The regular meeting of the Council of the City of Martinsville, Virginia was held on February 9, 2021 in Council Chambers, Municipal Building, at 7:00 PM with Mayor Kathy Lawson presiding. Other Council Members present included Danny Turner, Jennifer Bowles, Tammy Pearson and Chad Martin. Staff present included City Manager Leon Towarnicki, Assistant City Manager/City Attorney Eric Monday, Clerk of Council Karen Roberts, Water Resources Director Mike Kahle, Building Inspector Kris Bridges and Police Chief Eddie Cassady.

Mayor Lawson called the meeting to order and advised Council would go into Closed Session beginning at 6:15 PM. In accordance with section 2.1-344 (A) Code of Virginia (1950, and as amended) and upon a motion by Vice Mayor Bowles, seconded by Council Member Turner with the following 4-0 recorded vote: Vice Mayor Bowles, aye; Council Member Pearson, aye; Council Member Turner, aye; and Mayor Lawson, aye. Council Member Martin joined Closed Session at 6:45pm. Council convened in Closed Session to discuss the following matters: (A) appointments to boards and commissions, as authorized by Subsection 1 and (B) Consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff members, attorneys or consultants pertaining to actual or probable litigation, or other specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel, as authorized by Subsection 7. At the conclusion of Closed Session, each returning member of Council certified that (1) only public business matters exempt from open meeting requirements were discussed in said Closed Session; and (2) only those business matters identified in the motion convening the Closed Session were heard, discussed, or considered during the meeting. A motion was made by Council Member Turner; seconded by Vice Mayor Bowles, with the following 5-0 recorded vote in favor to return to Open Session: Mayor Lawson, aye; Council Member Martin, aye; Vice Mayor Bowles, aye; Council Member Turner, aye; and Council Member Pearson, aye.

Coming out of Closed Session, Vice Mayor Bowles made a motion to appoint Julie Wells to the Southern Virginia Recreation Facilities Authority for a 4-year term ending October 31, 2024. Council Member Pearson seconded the motion with all Council Members voting in favor. No other action was taken from Closed Session.

Following the Pledge to the American Flag and invocation by Council Member Pearson, Lawson welcomed everyone to the meeting. Lawson explained that the meeting would follow COVID guidelines, allowing limited attendance and recognizing social distancing recommendations.

Approve minutes from the January 26, 2021 Council Meetings – Vice Mayor Bowles made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Council Member Pearson seconded the motion with all Council Members voting in favor.

Hear an update on FY20 Water Resources operations – Mike Kahle, Director of the Water Resources department shared a PowerPoint updating Council on the Water and Wastewater departments, revenue and expenditures, current ongoing projects including the Beaver Creek spillway project, and contact information for water and wastewater staff. Mayor Lawson asked

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if the Reservoir is still open on the weekends. Kahle confirmed it is open on the weekends weather permitting but not during the week. He hopes the spillway project will be complete by May or June. Vice Mayor Bowles asked how the City would contact a resident for a leaky toilet. Kahle explained that the new meters send information to the department daily and will flag any discrepancies or high usage of water, Kahle would then contact the property owner to make sure they are aware of the leak so that can be repaired and prevent additional costs. Lawson said that was especially helpful in churches or other buildings where there may be days where no one is there to notice the leak. Council Member Turner asked if the City stocks the reservoir with fish. Kahle explained that was up to Virginia Fish and Game and those wanting to fish must have a permit.

## Update Water Resources Operations

Martinsville City Council Presentation  
Tuesday, February 9, 2021  
Mike Kahle, Water Resources Director

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## Water/Wastewater Summary

- Production:
  - Average flow at the Wastewater Treatment Plant was 5.89 MGD for calendar year 2020. Plant is licensed to operate up to 8 MGD. Plant operates 24/7/365.
  - Water production was 1.64 MGD for the same period. Plant is licensed to operate up to 7.4 MGD. Plant operates an average of 12 hours/day, 7 days/week.
  - Beaver Creek Reservoir is the primary water supply source for the City. Constructed in the 1950s, 175 acres, 1.3 billion gallons. Leatherwood Creek is permitted as a secondary source (up to 2 MGD). City has a third source through a HCPSA connection.

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## Revenue/Expenditures

(Through Dec. 31, 2020)

Total Water Revenue = \$1,946,152 (51% of budget)

Total Water Expense = \$2,016,548

Net Revenue = \$70,396

Total WW Revenue = \$2,438,491 (53% of budget)

Total WW Expense = \$2,086,668

Net Revenue = -\$351,823

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## Current Projects

- Planned sewer line upgrades on Askin St and Peters St
- New service connection for Harbor Freight
- Possible water line extension on Commonwealth Blvd, below Chop Stix
- Jones Creek Interceptor (grant submitted)
- Inundation Study Update

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## Projects, continued

- Smith River Intercept completed.
- Asset Management(Fiscal Sustainability Plan) in place at Wastewater Plant.
- Ongoing upgrade to electrical service at Wastewater plant, 90% complete.
- Ongoing repairs to sludge handling building, replacing aged equipment.
- Replacement/ training of new staff at Wastewater plant.
- Replacement / training of new staff at Water plant.
- Beaver Creek impound/spillway repairs under way, on schedule.
- Water line replacement on Cherokee Court and Trail complete.
- Asset Management (Fiscal Sustainability Plan) near completion at Water Plant.

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## Beaver Creek Spillway Project

- New turn-down wall at front of spillway complete.
- Sidewalls opened and repairs underway.
- Drain system installation under way.
- Reservoir water elevation reduced and provisions made to route water over spillway around work areas during construction
- Construction contract \$1,995,295
- Completion expected May/June 2021.

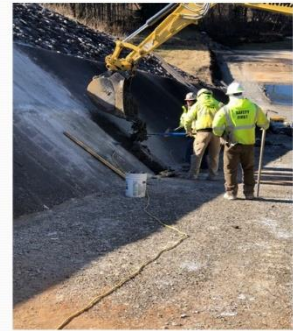
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## Beaver Creek Spillway Project



7

## Spillway Project



8

## Spillway Project



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## Staff

- Mike Kahle, Director of Water Resources, telephone 403-5157, email [mkahle@ci.martinsville.va.us](mailto:mkahle@ci.martinsville.va.us)
- G.W Robertson, Water Plant Manager telephone 403-5137, email [gwr Robertson@ci.martinsville.va.us](mailto:gwr Robertson@ci.martinsville.va.us)
- Wayne Brown, Wastewater Treatment Plant Manager, 656-5176, email [wbrown@ci.martinsville.va.us](mailto:wbrown@ci.martinsville.va.us)
- David Johnston, Water/WW Maint Coordinator 403-5225, email [dljohnston@ci.martinsville.va.us](mailto:djohnston@ci.martinsville.va.us)
- Mandy Muse, Industrial Coordinator, 252-7670; email [mmuse@ci.martinsville.va.us](mailto:mmuse@ci.martinsville.va.us)

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Hear an update from Building Inspections regarding demolition of structures within the City – Kris Bridges, Building Inspector presented a PowerPoint updating Council on demolition statistics over the past 5 years, a master list of demolition candidates, the top 13 properties being considered for demolition and a map of where those locations are located. The map shows that these properties are scattered throughout the City and not solely located in one specific location. Bridges confirmed there is an administrative fee that is charged on yard maintenance and other property maintenance invoices. Bridges explained the steps taken from the time his department receives a complaint, to contacting the property owner, to the



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demolition by owner or by the City. His department provides ample opportunity for the property owners to fix the property concerns to ensure the City does not spend tax payer money unless necessary. Council Member Pearson asked to view the list of commercial properties that would fall under potential demolition.

## DEMOLITION OF DILAPIDATED STRUCTURES

Presentation to Martinsville City Council  
Tuesday, February 9, 2021  
Department of Community Development  
Kris Bridges, Building Official & Zoning Administrator



### Demolitions – Last 5 Years

- 2016
  - 20 Demolitions
  - 0 due to code enforcement
  - 1 paid by City(Water Tower)
- 2017
  - 9 Demolitions
  - 5 due to Code Enforcement
  - 0 paid by City
- 2018
  - 5 Demolitions
  - 2 due to Code enforcement
  - 0 paid by City
- 2019
  - 21 Demolitions
  - 12 due to Code Enforcement
  - 3 paid by City
- 2020
  - 13 Demolitions
  - 8 due to Code Enforcement
  - 4 paid by City
- 2021
  - 5 Demolitions
  - 2 due to Code Enforcement
  - 0 paid by City

### Master List - Demo candidates

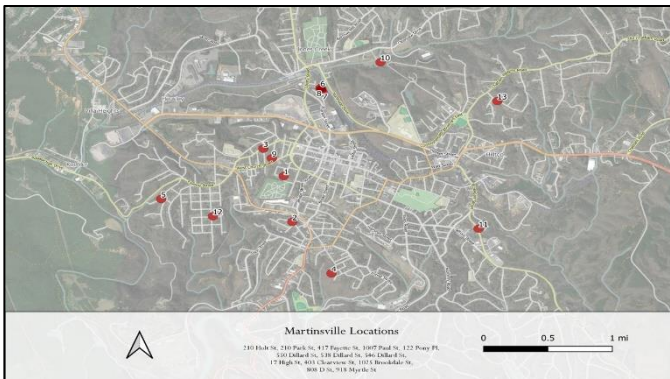
- |                     |                   |                       |                     |
|---------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| • 208 Askin St      | • 200 Emmette St  | • 105 Maple St        | • 1155 Pine Hall Rd |
| • 905 Askin St      | • 410 Fayette St  | • 214 McCoy St        | • 807 Pipe St       |
| • 1027 Askin St     | • 417 Fayette St  | • 1612 Meadowview Ln* | • 122 Pony Pl       |
| • 1020 Brookdale St | • 700 Fourth St   | • 918 Myrtle Rd**     | • 513 Second St     |
| • 1025 Brookdale St | • 1210 Hickory St | • 125 N Beaver St     | • 837 Smith St      |
| • 1303 Carver Ct    | • 17 High St      | • 1005 Oak St         | • 847 Smith St      |
| • 403 Clearview Dr  | • 30½ High St     | • 112 Park St         | • 211 Stuart St     |
| • 326 Clift St      | • 200 Holt St     | • 120 Park St         | • 5 Sutherlin St    |
| • 504 College St    | • 210 Holt St     | • 210 Park St         | • 509 Swanson St*   |
| • 808 D St**        | • 1004 Jordan St  | • 1007 Paul St        | • 1223 Top St       |
| • 538 Dillard St    | • 825 Keel St     | • 16 Peters St        | • 1137 Wray St      |
| • 546 Dillard St    | • 1217 Lawson St  | • 1145 Pine Hall Rd   |                     |
| • 550 Dillard St    | • 618 Lee Terrace | • 1147 Pine Hall Rd   |                     |
| • 110 Echols St     | • 911 Loch St     |                       |                     |

\*Accessory bldg. only  
\*\*Foundation only

### Top Candidates

- |                   |                       |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. 210 Holt St    | 8. 546 Dillard St     |
| 2. 210 Park St    | 9. 17 High St         |
| 3. 417 Fayette St | 10. 403 Clearview St  |
| 4. 1007 Paul St   | 11. 1025 Brookdale St |
| 5. 122 Pony Pl    | 12. 808 D St*         |
| 6. 550 Dillard St | 13. 918 Myrtle St*    |
| 7. 538 Dillard St |                       |

\* Foundation only



210 Holt St.



210 Park St



417 Fayette St.



1007 Paul St.



122 Pony Pl.



550 Dillard St.



538 Dillard St.



546 Dillard St



17 High St.



403 Clearview Dr.



1025 Brookdale St.



918 Myrtle Rd.



808 D. St.



For additional information contact:

Kris Bridges  
Building Official & Zoning Administrator  
Department of Community Development

[kbridges@ci.Martinsville.va.us](mailto:kbridges@ci.Martinsville.va.us)  
(276) 403-5171

Hear an update from Building Inspections regarding automobile screening and nuisance issues within the City – Bridges, Building Inspector explained that there is an explosion of automobile dealers at the City entry corridors and it has become a concern of residents and other City businesses. There are reports of improper parking, parking on unapproved surfaces, vehicles in disrepair, etc. Bridges shared a PowerPoint detailing the complaint procedure and how a vehicle is flagged prior to towing. He detailed the process of communicating with the DMV, Nuisance and Code Enforcement and the Commonwealth's Attorney department on questionable locations and vehicles. Bridges provided a list and pictures of numerous locations of concern. Council Member Martin asked what the City would do with cars after they are towed if the owner chooses not to claim them. Bridges said those cars would be on the towing company lot and they have methods of following up and claiming payment. The Zoning Ordinance is not as strict and with the state law, the City must give owners 21 days to appeal. Those residents who don't respond will be the ones that will get their vehicles stickered and towed. The first step is to ensure the vehicles are DMV compliant.



## Automobiles: Screening & Nuisance Violations

Presentation to Martinsville City Council  
Tuesday, February 9, 2021  
Department of Community Development  
Kris Bridges, Building Official & Zoning Administrator



### Processes

- Residential – Complaint Based
  - If complaint is valid, post per current guidelines.
  - If violation is not corrected by the re-inspect date (typically 10 days) place sticker to correct violation in 24 hours.
  - If not abated, vehicle is towed.

### Processes

- Commercial – Proactive
- Priorities set by City Attorney and Inspections
  - Inspections compile list based on priorities
    - Submit list to VA DMV to determine if business is compliant - DMV to enforce violations
    - Submits to Martinsville Commissioner of Revenue to determine business license - is compliant - CoR/Commonwealth's Attorney to enforce violations
- Code enforcement
  - Zoning
    - Notice and timeline for compliance
    - Enforcement action §15.2-2286
    - Injunction §15.2-2208
    - Civil penalties §15.2-2209
  - Nuisance Ordinance
    - Same as residential
  - Junkyards
    - Follow Code of Virginia §33.2-804,
    - Commonwealth's Attorney to enforce violations

### Identified Locations

- South Memorial Blvd.
- North Memorial Blvd.
- West Church St.
- East Church St.
- West Commonwealth Blvd.
- Roanoke St.
- Broad St.
- Bridge St.
- Liberty St.

1102-1104  
S. Memorial Blvd.



1107 S. Memorial Blvd.



1035 S. Memorial Blvd. 1001 S. Memorial Blvd.



717 S. Memorial Blvd.



716 S. Memorial Blvd.



708 & 710  
S. Memorial Blvd.



700 & 624  
S. Memorial Blvd.



625 S. Memorial Blvd.



517 S. Memorial Blvd.



524 & 526 W. Church St. 711 N. Memorial Blvd.



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706 N. Memorial Blvd.      931 N. Memorial Blvd.



115 W. Church St.      600 W. Church St.



311 W. Church St.      904 E. Church St.



922 E. Church St.      926 E. Church St.



13 Roanoke St.      400 Broad St.



30 Bridge St.      613-B Liberty St.



703 Liberty St.      9 Roanoke St.



1315-1319 S. Memorial Blvd.      804 S. Memorial Blvd.





104 Wilson St.



800 N. Memorial Blvd.



716 Liberty St.



625 Liberty St.



1005-1013  
S. Memorial Blvd.



1227 S. Memorial Blvd.



For additional information contact:

Kris Bridges  
Building Official & Zoning Administrator  
Department of Community Development

[kbridges@ci.Martinsville.va.us](mailto:kbridges@ci.Martinsville.va.us)

(276) 403-5171

Business from the Floor – Mayor Lawson read an email from Ural Harris of 217 Stuart Street. Harris asked that the contracts between the City and the Solar Farm be made public. Harris asked questions related to the Solar Farm, stating that residents have the right to know this information. Lawson said that she had responded to Harris's email with answers to his questions. Harris voiced concerns about outdated information on the City website.

Comments by City Council – Council Member Pearson asked how Council should respond to business from the floor; Lawson explained that she had responded to Mr. Harris's email with answers to his questions. Pearson touched on the violence this past weekend, she thanked the police and emergency services for their quick response Friday night. Pearson hopes to work closely with civic leaders, churches and any others to bring an end to violent and destructive behavior in the City. It's important to bring together all citizens, all races, genders, ages, etc. Council Member Turner said he has had several citizens reach out to him to express their appreciation for the police officer who rushed in and potentially saved numerous lives this past Friday night. Council Member Martin attended the vigil with the family of the victims prior to the Council meeting. Martin stated that this violence needs to stop. His heart and prayers are with the families. Vice Mayor Bowles attended the school board meeting. She thanked High Street Baptist church for the goody bags. Bowles thanked Martin for being a Council representative at the vigil. Bowles is praying for the families and says she is saddened by the events. A bright spot is the police department, Bowles thanked the police for handling the situation the way it needed to be handled. She has seen numerous negative comments directed at Martinsville and the violence in this area and asks people to please not let this one incident define the City. There have been negative comments made towards black people, comments calling them thugs and criminals. She does not condone violence and encourages people to not



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let this one incident stereotype a specific race. The mistakes of one person should not speak for the entire community. Bowles wished residents a happy Black History month, stating that black history is American history. She has been enjoying Henry County Public Schools posts regarding black historians. Mayor Lawson echoed other council members comments related to the recent violence. Friday night was not the normal for our community which is a very safe community to live in. As a community, we should not be pointing fingers. Those involved in the violence and their families have had their lives changed forever. Martinsville is a great place to live, work and raise a family. Lawson asked City Attorney Monday how long Comcast will “ride the COVID train” before they open the local office back up. The office was already COVID compliant even before the outbreak in March. Comcast has an agreement with the City and there is no reason for that office to be closed for 11 months. Lawson explained the yellow ribbons around the City; those were put out by Rev Tyler Millner in memory of COVID victims. Lawson invited Council to help put out flags for George Washington Day.

Comments by the City Manager – City Manager Towarnicki shared that the municipal building will be closed Monday for George Washington Day. He updated Council on COVID vaccines and information for registration at local clinics. Martinsville Fire and EMS assisted SOVAH health this past weekend with a COVID drive-thru clinic which went well. Not all residents have access to register online so the City will include a printed copy of the vaccine application with the City utility bill for residents to complete and mail back to the Health Department. Local pharmacies will begin administering vaccines soon. There are vaccine applications at the Municipal front door, Chamber of Commerce, and other various locations with a drop box located at the Virginia Department of Health. Towarnicki updated Council on the CARES funding and utility assistance funds, stating of the \$205,000, \$140,000 of that has been allocated to assist delinquent utility customers. Towarnicki shared that there are a number of vacancies for City Boards and Commissions, and directed residents to visit the City website for descriptions of those boards and an online application. Towarnicki gave kudos to Sheriff Steve Draper for being the longest serving Sheriff in Virginia.

City Attorney Monday pointed out that at least one commercial data provider had raised their rates and limited their internet service. The City’s MiNET program is priced fairly, has no data cap and provides amazing service and excellent bandwidth speeds.

There being no further business, Vice Mayor Bowles made a motion to adjourn the meeting; the motion was seconded by Council Member Martin with all Council Members voting in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:10pm.

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Karen Roberts  
Clerk of Council

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Kathy Lawson  
Mayor